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Contact: Jason Mahler

(202) 225-8104

jason.mahler@mail.house.gov

**ESHOO OPPOSES BILL THAT WEAKENS STATE FOOD SAFETY PROTECTIONS
Proposes Amendment to Preserve State Food Safety Protections for
Risks of Cancer, Birth Defects, and Reproductive Health**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Yesterday, Rep. Anna G. Eshoo (D-Palo Alto) voted to protect state and local food safety protections by opposing H.R. 4167, the *National Uniformity for Food Act*, which passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 283 - 139. The bill could sweep away more than 200 food safety laws in all 50 states, including California's Proposition 65 which was approved by voters in 1986 to protect citizens from exposure to chemicals known to cause cancer, birth defects or other reproductive harm.

"This bill is about rewarding the food industry, not about protecting consumers," Rep. Eshoo said. "Just look at who supports the bill and who opposes it. On one side, there's industry represented by organizations such as the International Food Additives Association, International Association of Color Manufacturers, the Flavor and Extract Manufacturers, the American Plastics Council, and the Food Products Association, all claiming that this bill will protect the health and safety of consumers. On the other side, we have food and drug officials from every state, every state department of agriculture, 39 attorneys general, and every leading consumer and environmental group saying that this bill shreds the food safety net."

"This is a stealth bill. It was never subjected to the scrutiny of a legislative hearing. If this becomes law, I think the public is going to be stunned by the protections that will be swept away."

The *National Uniformity for Food Act* would prevent states from adopting any food safety law or requirement that is not "identical" to a federal law or requirement unless the federal government provides an exemption to the state. States will have to seek federal approval for any food safety protections that are more stringent than the federal government's or that address a hazard that the federal government has failed to.

Rep. Eshoo was a lead sponsor of an amendment to enable states to retain and establish their own food safety warnings or standards to protect consumers against the risk of birth defects, reproductive health problems, allergic reactions, and cancer. It also would allow states to take action to protect the health of children.

"In these cases involving extremely vulnerable populations and severe threats to the public health, state governments should be allowed to act without saying 'mother may I' to the federal government," Eshoo said.

The Eshoo Amendment, sponsored with Reps. Capps (D-Santa Barbara), Stupak (D-Michigan), and Waxman (D-Los Angeles), was defeated by a vote of 161 - 259. The legislation will now go to the Senate for further consideration.

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